

# MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

## Success Stories from the Field

### Thermoflex

#### Puerto Rico Manufacturing Extension Inc

#### Reduced Setup Times Result In Retained Customers At Thermoflex

##### Client Profile:

Thermoflex Corp. is a thermoformed packaging firm located in Bayamon, Puerto Rico. The company has been servicing the medical device industry for the last five years. It currently employs 49 people.

##### Situation:

Long setup times on Thermoflex Corp.'s large machines had a negative impact on the company's customer delivery schedules and significantly raised overtime costs. One of Thermoflex's key customers considered cancelling orders due to poor on-time delivery rates. Thermoflex management contacted Puerto Rico Manufacturing Extension, Inc. (PRiMEX), a NIST MEP network affiliate, for help in the identification of opportunities to reduce setup time by at least 25 percent.

##### Solution:

PRiMEX reviewed the operation and proposed a two-day setup reduction blitz. Thermoflex management accepted and immediately formed a team of nine operators to work with PRiMEX.

PRiMEX began by videotaping a complete setup operation. The operators then received classroom training in the specific techniques for reducing the setup process. Using the videotape as a model and applying the techniques learned during the classroom training, the operators suggested changes to the process designed to eliminate waste and reduce time.

PRiMEX once again videotaped the setup process as the operators applied their changes. This time, unnecessary steps were eliminated and a dramatic reduction in setup time occurred. The team discussed and documented the changes, which are now a regular part of the machine setup process.

##### Results:

Reduced setup time from 5.19 hours to 2.23, for a 49 percent reduction.

Saved overhead costs of \$39,000 a year for one machine.

Reduced significant back orders from three months to one month in six weeks.

Set a goal to further reduce the setup times by another 10 percent.

##### Testimonial:

"The results of the PRiMEX setup reduction blitz were excellent. Our

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performance in changeovers has improved since our people are using the techniques they learned".

Hector Rivera, Production Supervisor